

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

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FOR CHARGE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEE BOAT CASES: APPROACHES TO
COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM

1. SUMMARY. US ATTORNEY GENERAL'S REFUGEE PAROLE
ANNOUNCEMENT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGH-LEVEL APPROACH
SEEKING CONTINUED AND INCREASED GOI HOSPITALITY FOR
REFUGEES. REPORT REQUIRED PRIOR AUGUST 18. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AUGUST 11 MADE A DETERMINATION TO
PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES 15,000 INDOCHINESE, INCLUDING
7000 BOAT CASE REFUGEES. HIS DETERMINATION SHOULD LIGHTEN
REFUGEE PRESSURES IN COUNTRIES OF FIRST ASYLUM. IT
PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR A RENEWED APPEAL TO EXTEND HOSPITAL-
ITY TO BOAT CASE REFUGEES.

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3. THE PRESIDENT, KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, THE PRESS, AND
THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAVE EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE
PLIGHT OF THE BOAT CASE REFUGEES. ACCOUNTS OF EXTENSIVE
SUFFERING AND LOSS OF LIFE REACHED A CRESCENDO IN JUNE
AND JULY. THEY CENTERED ON SHIPS AT SEA THAT PASSED UP
REFUGEES IN DISTRESS, AND ON COUNTRIES AROUND THE PERIPHERY
OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA THAT FORCED BOATS BACK OFFSHORE,

OR REFUSED TO ALLOW TO DEBARK IN THEIR PORTS THOSE REFUGEES THAT SHIPS HAD ALREADY RESCUED. THERE IS MUCH MORE

DOMESTIC CONCERN OVER THE ISSUE THAN DURING THE 1976 REQUEST FOR THE EXPANDED PAROLE PROGRAM.

4. SOME COUNTRIES OF TRADITIONAL IMMIGRATION ARE CONTINUING OR EXPANDING THEIR EFFORTS. FRANCE HAS AVERAGED ABOUT 1000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES PER MONTH SINCE MAY 1975. AUSTRALIA HAS JUST ESTABLISHED A REFUGEE OFFICE IN BANGKOK. AUSTRALIA, IN ADDITION TO THE SOME 3000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IT HAS ALREADY TAKEN IN, PLANS TO ADMIT 150 PER MONTH FOR AT LEAST A YEAR STARTING IN SEPTEMBER 1977. NEW ZEALAND ANNOUNCED JULY 26 THAT IT WOULD SHORTLY ACCEPT UP TO 70 FAMILIES, OR SOME 420 INDIVIDUALS (REF B). CANADA, WHICH HAS ALREADY TAKEN IN SOME 7000, RECENTLY INFORMED THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES THAT IT WOULD ACCEPT 450 MORE. THE UNITED STATES, WHICH HAS ABOUT 146,000 IN COUNTRY, WILL TAKE 8000 FROM THAI CAMPS, IN ADDITION TO 7000 BOAT CASE REFUGEES. DENMARK JUST ANNOUNCED IT WOULD ADMIT 50 BOAT CASES.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: CHARGE SHOULD INFORM GOI AT HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL(S) OF NEW U.S. PAROLE PROGRAM. WE HOPE THAT THE U.S. PROGRAM (PLUS THOSE CONTINUING OR RECENTLY ANNOUNCED BY FRANCE, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND AND DENMARK AS WELL AS OTHERS WHICH MAY FOLLOW

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U.S. LEAD) WILL REDUCE SOME OF THE REFUGEE PROBLEMS BEING FACED BY THE ASEAN STATES INCLUDING INDONESIA. YOU MAY NOTE THAT WE ARE APPRECIATIVE OF GOI RECORD ON ACCEPTING BOAT CASES, PARTICULARLY SINCE MANY OF REFUGEES ACCEPTED FOR LANDING IN INDONESIA HAD BEEN REFUSED ADMISSION ELSEWHERE. YOU MAY WISH NOTE IN APPROPRIATE MANNER OUR CONFIDENCE IN CONTINUED GOI ACCEPTANCE OF AND ASSISTANCE TO FUTURE BOAT CASE ARRIVALS. AT YOUR DISCRETION, YOU MIGHT ALLUDE TO OPPORTUNITY BOAT CASES PRESENT FOR FAVORABLE INDONESIAN HUMANITARIAN IMAGE IN U.S. OUR BOAT CASE PAROLE PROGRAM SHOULD SHORTLY ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF BOAT CASES AND IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN THE MOVEMENT OF NUMBERS OF THEM TO THE UNITED STATES. PLEASE REPORT BY AUGUST 18.

6. SIMILAR APPROACHES ARE BEING MADE BY USG TO OTHER FIRST ASYLUM COUNTRIES AND CONCURRENT DEMARCHES REQUESTED OF AUSTRALIA, CANADA, FRANCE, DENMARK, AND NEW ZEALAND. CHRISTOPHER

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